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## Denver radio gets out word on shaken baby syndrome



UNITED AGAINST ABUSE | Margie Stelzel and her son Hunter, 9, visit Children's Hospital on Monday to help publicize a "radio rally." At noon Wednesday, 39 Denver-area radio stations will break from regular programming to air the same announcement aimed at preventing shaken-baby syndrome. As an infant, Hunter was shaken by a day-care provider. (Post / John Prieto)

An unprecedented event takes place on 39 Denver area radio stations Wednesday.

All 39 will broadcast simultaneously a 30-second message: "No matter how much she cries, no matter how tired you are, no matter how frustrated you get, never, ever shake a baby."

Shaken baby syndrome is the leading cause of trauma deaths at The Children's Hospital. Nationally, more than 1,500 children under 3 die of abuse every year, most of them from SBS.

The 30-second radio spot, part of a planned media blitz, begins with a screeching baby, one grating enough to give any caregiver the whim-whams.

The message: Nice people shake babies too. "It evokes an emotional response," said Dr. Andrew Sirotnak during a press conference on Monday.

Don't do it. "Babies cry for a reason. Never, ever shake a baby." Shaking a baby can cause brain damage, blindness, hearing loss, paralysis and death.

"Poster child" for the campaign is 9-year-old Hunter Stelzel, who survived being shaken as an infant but has endured 19 surgeries to correct resulting problems.

The 39 stations taking part in Wednesday's message, sponsored by Kohl's, Children's and the Kempe Center, are owned by Clear Channel, Lincoln Financial Media, Entravision, Entercom, CBS Radio, NRC Broadcasting and Denver Radio Co.